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U. S. Department of Agriculture

THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 50 associate NBC radio stations, Monday, February 3, 1936.

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Hello folks. I don't believe it matters if the groundhog did or did not see his shadow yesterday it will not be long now until most of us will be plowing and planting our gardens. The many letters that we are getting indicate that there is more than usual interest in gardening this year and while the market gardeners and fruit growers are not saying much about what they intend to do they are asking a lot of questions about the various new varieties and inquiring as to where the seeds or plants may be obtained. A large percentage of these questions are about the disease resistant varieties.

It would not be quite ethical for me to mention certain seed houses that are offering this or that variety but I might suggest that seeds of the Marglobe, Pritchard and Break O'Day tomatoes are now listed by practically all seed houses. Seeds of the new Penn State and Rutgers tomatoes are for sale by a few of the seed houses in the eastern section. Seed of the new Glovel tomato that I have mentioned in previous broadcasts is not on sale this year but this variety which was developed primarily for Florida conditions is being tried by a number of experimenters in different parts of the country in order to see what it will do under a wide range of climatic conditions.

Recently I have received a number of letters asking if the Marglobe, Pritchard and Break O'Day tomatoes are resistant to both the Fusarium wilt disease and the various leaf-blight and rusts. These varieties are perhaps 95% resistant to the wilt disease but no particular claims are made as to their resistance to the various leaf diseases. Owing to their splendid vigor they are often found to be somewhat resistant to the leaf diseases, but I would advise that the plants be sprayed for the control of the leaf diseases.

Seeds of the Yellows resistant strains of cabbage which have been developed in Wisconsin within the past few years are being offered by a few of the seedsmen of the general Great Lakes region and others, but these resistant strains of cabbage have not as yet become universally cataloged by seed dealers generally.

One of the finest additions to our list of bean varieties is the new Wisconsin Refugee, a Mosaic resistant stringless refugee bean. Any of you who have bought and used any of those whole-pod canned Wisconsin Refugee beans know what good canned beans are and now this new Mosaic resistant sort is superior to the old Refugee in many ways. That old mosaic disease has been the nightmare of bean growers for years and now through careful selection and plant breeding we are getting strains and varieties that are practically immune to the mosaic disease. Perhaps you will recognize the mosaic disease of beans when I tell you that it causes a mottling of the

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leaves into light- and dark-green areas, accompanied by a curling and stunting of the leaves and a heavy reduction in yield. The disease is carried in the seed and when once introduced is spread by plant lice. The green-pod variety known as Bountiful is fairly resistant to mosaic disease.

Sure Crop Wax is similar to the old Currie's Rust-proof Wax but is more vigorous and produces pods that are very brittle and stringless also of very fine flavor. It is an excellent home garden and market bean. The old Black Valentine has, in years past, been one of the main shipping varieties of string beans, and I say string beans because the pods of this variety are stringy, but now our seed breeders have given us the new Stringless Black Valentine that is as the name implies perfectly stringless. In other words, instead of you having to carefully pull the strings from the string beans, all you have to do is to simply break or snap the pods of the stringless beans.

Sweet corn is one of our most prized garden vegetables and when Golden Bantam was introduced it made a great hit among those of us who enjoy burying our faces in a big ear of buttered corn. Country Gentlemen has also been one of our most highly esteemed sweet corns for many years; now one of our largest seedbreeding firms has come out with a new variety which is a cross between Golden Bantam and Country Gentleman. This new variety has the characteristic golden color and flavor of Golden Bantam and the zigzag arrangement and deepness of the kernels found in Country Gentleman. I have not had a chance to try out this new variety but the originators have sent me a generous sample of the seed and along about the 20th of July I hope to be able to report on its quality.

You may recall that on several occasions I have stated that I am not inclined to plant the novelties except in a trial way until they have been fairly well tried out, but in the case of some of the newer things I have mentioned today the introducers have made pretty thorough tests to see how they will perform under different conditions.

While I am on this question of garden seeds I want to say that the Department of Agriculture does not, and I want to emphasize those two words, "does not" have any garden seeds either for sale or free distribution. Once upon a time we had what was called the Congressional Seed distribution but that was discontinued many years ago.

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